

Positive Action

Brief Description | Recognition | Program IOM | Intervention Type | Content Focus | Protective Factors
Risk Factors | Interventions by Domain | Key Program Approaches | Outcomes | Evaluation Design
Delivery Specifications | Intended Setting | Fidelity | Barriers and Problems | Personnel | Education
Personnel Training | Cost | Intended Age Group | Intended Population | Gender Focus
Replication Information | Contact Information

Program developers or their agents provided the Model Program information below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Positive Action is an integrated, comprehensive program that improves the academic achievement and multiple behaviors of children and adolescents 5 to 18 years of age. It is intensive, with lessons at each grade level from kindergarten to 12th grade that are reinforced schoolwide, at home, and in the community. It includes school, family, and community components that work together or stand alone.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

PA was developed in Twin Falls, ID, between 1974 and 1982, at which time the Positive Action Company was founded. The program has been used in more than 7,000 schools nationally and internationally. Development and refinement of the program are ongoing. PA is based on the intuitive philosophy that "you feel good about yourself when you do positive things." The program aligns schools, parents, and communities in promoting specific positive actions for youth that affect them physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.

RECOGNITION

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Model Program

National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Model Program

Safe and Drug Free Schools: Promising Program

Title I Comprehensive School Reform: Model Program

Education Commission of the States for Comprehensive School Reform: Promising Practices

Idaho Exemplary Substance Abuse Programs: Governor's Award

Brigham Young University Women's Research Institute: Effective Program for Anti-violence

Nassau Community College, Hate Crime Resource Guide: Highlighted Program for Anti-bias



INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE CLASSIFICATION (IOM)

UNIVERSAL, SELECTIVE, INDICATED

Universal program as a school- or communitywide program.

Selective program for selected high-risk students in special pull-out groups, after-school program, or group program in social service agencies.

Indicated program used by school counselors with problem students or in social service agencies.

INTERVENTION TYPE

SCHOOL-BASED

CONTENT FOCUS

ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE, TOBACCO

In general, the program does not specifically target substance use except in fifth grade and middle school where Drug Education Supplement materials, specifically targeting substance use and abuse, are used along with the regular classroom curriculum.

Drugs that are specifically targeted are:

Alcohol, amphetamines, anabolic steroids, barbiturates, cocaine, crack cocaine, diet pills, hashish, heroin, inhalants, LSD, marijuana, methamphetamines, organic hallucinogens, PCP, synthetic hallucinogens, and tobacco.

Parent involvement as an adjunct strategy:

Parents are part of the decisionmaking team that is responsible for the adoption of the Positive Action program. They also serve on the Positive Action Committee and are encouraged to take part in appropriate training and to use Positive Actions for Living as part of their own personal and their family's development. They take part in the development of the mission statement and goals and support the activities that meet those goals. They achieve this by participating in the classroom, helping with school-climate activities, and participating in parenting classes. Parents are invited to be part of assemblies, field trips, and special events such as Positive Action Day, Back-to-School Night, or open houses. They can also participate in the evaluation of the program outcomes by completing assessment surveys.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL

- Positive personal characteristics (e.g., cooperation, self-concept, self-discipline, motivation to succeed)
- Healthy ethical, social, and emotional development
- Social skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution, positive empathy)
- Positive bonding to social institutions and values, including school
- Commitment to prosocial values

FAMILY

- Bonding and attachment with parents and siblings
- Positive parenting (e.g., avoiding use of criticism, modeling and reinforcing positive behavior and accomplishment)
- Emotionally supportive family (e.g., knowledge of child's friends and their parents, involvement in homework and school activities)
- Frequent positive communication

PEER

- Association with peers who are involved in school
- Association with peers who engage in positive behaviors

SCHOOL

- Caring and supportive teachers, staff, and school climate
- Environment reinforces positive behavior
- Teacher warmth and positive role modeling

COMMUNITY

- Student, parent, and school involvement with community

RISK FACTORS

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL

- Inadequate self-concept, confidence, or social skills
- Problem or unhealthy behaviors
- Susceptibility to peer pressure

FAMILY

- Family disorganization and conflict
- Lack of involvement

PEER

- Delinquent peers

SCHOOL

- Disorganized, chaotic, lax, or inconsistent rules
- Lack of teacher warmth, positive role modeling, and reinforcement

COMMUNITY

- Community disorganization
 - Easy availability of drugs
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INTERVENTIONS BY DOMAIN

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL

- After-school, peer-led alcohol, tobacco, and drug education curricula
- Life/social skills training

FAMILY

- Parent education/parenting skills training

PEER

- Peer-resistance training

SCHOOL

- Comprehensive school change programs including components to improve parent involvement, change classroom management and/or instructional style, and improve student commitment to school community

COMMUNITY

- Multi-agency activities and collaboration

KEY PROGRAM APPROACHES

IN-SCHOOL CURRICULA, PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS, OTHER: SCHOOL CLIMATE CHANGE

Positive Action is comprehensive and identifies strategies and activities that touch on most of the approaches listed. Highlighted here are the key approaches. All materials are based on the same six unit concepts that teach what a self-concept is and the positive actions for the physical, intellectual, and social/emotional areas. The philosophy that underlies all of the program material is that you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions.

IN-SCHOOL CURRICULA

The Positive Action classroom curriculum uses grade-level Teacher's Kits, which come with completely planned lessons including scripts, stories, activities, and discussion questions. Each lesson and unit builds on the previous ones. The free Scope and Sequence booklet provides an overview of the curriculum. The grade-level materials are available for elementary school (K–5), middle school (6–8), and high school (9–12).

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

The Family Kit provides parents with a curriculum that includes 42 lessons with lively stories, activities, discussion questions, and materials to help the family apply the concepts as individuals, family members, and members of the community. The parents also have materials to help them apply the concepts as parents. The lessons are taught once a week. The Family Kit provides strategies for improving communication, parenting, and student learning. The school involves the parents in school assemblies, Positive Action Day, and other activities. The classroom curriculum also involves the parents with notes, newsletters, and classroom activities in which they can participate with their children.

OTHER: SCHOOL CLIMATE CHANGE

The Principal's Kits for elementary and secondary (middle school and high school) administrators provide schoolwide activities such as assemblies, celebrations, a newspaper, the PALS club (community service group for middle and high school youth), tutoring, peace and diversity initiatives, and other activities for reinforcing Positive Action in the classroom. The Elementary Principal's Kit also has items for reinforcing positive actions throughout the school: stickers, tokens, Words of the Week, ICU Doing Something Positive Box, and Positive Notes. The secondary school Principal's Kit has a Peace Flag for reinforcing positive actions throughout the middle school and high school throughout the school day. Home-school and school district-community partnerships are a key approach for addressing volunteering, funding, mentoring, advocacy, and publicity strategies.

Typical problems that users experience in implementing these program strategies and potential solution:

Some schools find it difficult to find adequate time for proper training. The training consists of 1 to 2 days at the beginning of the school year and another 1 or 2 days during the first year at midyear and end-of-year followup. Creating an administrative supported training date is helpful.

HOW IT WORKS

Ideally, a PA school implements the program schoolwide and reinforces positive actions throughout the day. The principal, a PA Coordinator, and PA Committee guide the program. Classroom teachers teach the curriculum using a grade-appropriate kit containing prepared materials and a manual with lesson plans. Counselor and special education materials are included. Parents receive a Family Kit that contains lessons and materials that correlate to the school program and supports parenting classes. The Community Kit is used to organize a steering committee that guides community partners to develop and coordinate positive community initiatives and activities. PA offers an implementation plan, an interactive Web site, and a program evaluation plan that schools are strongly encouraged to use in order to achieve implementation fidelity.

First and foremost, the PA program requires willing faculty, administrative staff, parents, community members, and, most important, a principal who will provide primary leadership. Key staff includes:

- **Positive Action Committee**—This group is composed of a teacher from every grade level, the principal or designee, a support staff representative, several parents, community members and students. They oversee program implementation.
- **Positive Action Coordinator**—This person may be the principal or designee and is responsible for coordinating the Positive Action Committee and monitors day-to-day program activities.
- **Parent Coordinator**—A member of the Positive Action Committee, this individual provides information to parents and assists with parenting classes.
- **Community Coordinator**—Coordinates the community steering committee and plans activities.

Training and Materials

Schools implementing the PA program will need a Principal's Kit for the school-climate program; a grade-level Teacher's Kit for each classroom, special education class, and after-school program; a Counselor's Kit; Family Kits for parents; a Community Kit; and an implementation plan. The Parent and Positive Action Coordinators, adult members of the Coordinating Committee, and all teachers should participate in .5 to 2 days of training. One trainer can train 50 people. Schools need not implement all program components, as each can stand alone.

OUTCOMES

DECREASES IN SUBSTANCE USE, REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS, IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS

DECREASES IN SUBSTANCE USE

- Southeastern middle schools with a high proportion of Positive Action graduates (from elementary schools with Positive Action) reported 71% fewer incidents of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drug use than schools with low proportions of Positive Action graduates.
- Southeastern high schools with 27% to 50% of their students Positive Action graduates (from elementary schools with Positive Action) reported 49% fewer incidents of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drug use than high schools with <15% Positive Action graduates.

REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS

- Intervention students from Nevada reported 85% fewer violent incidents per 100 students and 4.5% lower absenteeism.
- Intervention students from Hawaii reported 78% fewer disciplinary problems per 100 students and 7.5% lower daily absenteeism.
- Intervention students from a large southeastern district reported 21% fewer violence-related incidents and 8% fewer suspensions from school.
- Southeastern middle schools with a high proportion of Positive Action graduates (from elementary schools with Positive Action) reported 70% fewer incidents of violence, 69% less disruptive and disrespectful behavior, 52% less property crime, and 75% less absenteeism than schools with low proportions of Positive Action graduates.
- Southeastern high schools with 27% to 50% of their students Positive Action graduates (from elementary schools with Positive Action) reported 50% fewer incidents of violence, 63% less sexually related problem behaviors, 28% less disruptive and disrespectful behaviors, 57% fewer incidents of falsifying records, 25% fewer out-of-school suspensions, 30% fewer in-school suspensions, 12% less absenteeism, and 37% lower drop-out rate.

IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Intervention students from Nevada reported 7.5% less absenteeism and scored 16% higher in their fourth grade achievement scores (reading and math combined).
- Intervention students from Hawaii reported 52% better SAT scores (reading and math combined).
- Intervention students from southeastern schools reported 50% higher Florida reading scores.
- Southeastern middle schools with a high proportion of Positive Action graduates (from elementary schools with Positive Action) reported 18% more students scoring above average on the grade 8 NRT (reading and math combined) than schools with a low proportion of Positive Action graduates.
- Southeastern high schools with 27% to 50% of their students Positive Action graduates (from elementary schools with Positive Action) reported 9% to 15% better achievement on five different standardized tests, 18% more graduates employed, and 38% more graduates continuing their education than high schools with <15% Positive Action graduates.
- Intervention students in a quasi-experimental evaluation reported a 33% improved self-concept.

Note: For all outcomes, effects were as strong or stronger in higher-risk schools (schools with higher percentages of minority students, students receiving free or reduced-priced lunch, highly mobile student populations, or larger schools).

Benefits

Develops healthy, self-motivated children who avoid harmful behaviors and substances

Develops educators who are professional, caring, and competent

Develops parents who are involved with their children's education and school, and who teach and reinforce program goals at home

Offers students a quality after-school program

Motivates community activists to link their community groups to local schools

EVALUATION DESIGN

From the 1970s through 2001, PA has been researched and evaluated in a wide variety of schools (with high and low minority representation, mobility rates, and/or levels of poverty) by the program's developer, various school districts, and independent evaluators. Evaluations have used experimental-control group, national comparison group (e.g., evaluating changes in percentile rankings), matched control, pre- and postcase studies, and comparison group study designs. Data from various comparison group designs involving more than 100 elementary schools that used PA demonstrate the program's consistent positive effects on student behavior (i.e., discipline, suspensions, crime, violence, drug use), performance (i.e., attendance, achievement), and self-concept. Results were often better in more disadvantaged schools.

DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS

0–12 YEARS

Amount of time required to deliver the program to obtain documented outcomes:

Elementary school

Teacher's Manual contains about 140 lessons that take 15 minutes each, taught 4 days a week at the same time of day in all classrooms.

Teacher's Kit (by grade, K–5) contains materials for 30 students including activity sheets or booklets, hands-on materials and stickers, and a variety of other materials such as puppets, board games, posters, and music cassettes.

Fifth Grade Drug Education Supplement Teacher's Kit provides indepth learning about drugs' effects on the concepts of the curriculum and is designed for use along with the Fifth Grade Teacher's Kit.

Middle School

The middle school lessons are usually taught in advisory or homeroom classes but can be effective in family living, parenting, life skills, special education classes, or core classes.

Sixth Grade Teacher's Kit includes 139 lessons taught 4 or 5 days a week. A Conflict Resolution Kit is added to every lesson in the Fourth Unit. An interactive Web site with activities and games is also available.

Middle School Drug Education Supplement Kit teaches how to maintain a positive viewpoint and how drugs limit potential and choices and affect students' physical, intellectual, and emotional well-being. The kit also includes the Conflict Resolution Kit, which is added to every lesson in the Fourth Unit.

Seventh Grade Teacher's Kit and Eighth Grade Teacher's Kit provide a high level of student involvement through a radio play/talk show. Lessons are taught 2 to 3 days per week. Grade 7 has 81 lessons. Grade 8 includes 77 lessons. The Conflict Resolution Kit is also included in each kit to be added to every lesson in the Fourth Unit.

High School

There is a teacher's guide Positive Action for Teens divided into five parts. Part one consists of Positive Actions for Living, which includes 42 lessons and role-plays with family, community, and parent experiences. Part two is Positive Thoughts Step One with a 42-act play and discussions. Part three is Positive Actions Step Two with Life's Big Questions listed by unit and with other activities. Part four is Positive Feelings Step Three with journaling and celebrations. Part five is the Conflict Resolution Plan used with every lesson in the Fourth Unit.

INTENDED SETTING

RURAL, URBAN, SUBURBAN

Developed for and has been proven successful in all types of settings.

FIDELITY

Components that must be included in order to achieve the same outcomes cited by the developer:

Positive Action Committee: a group composed of a teacher from every grade level, the principal, a support staff representative, several parents, community members, and students. The committee could also consist of representatives from any combination of the program components being used. This group oversees and promotes the fidelity of the program implementation.

Positive Action Coordinator: this person may be the principal or designee or other coordinator and is responsible for coordinating the Positive Action Committee, monitoring the fidelity of day-to-day program activities, and providing technical assistance.

Program Materials: schools implementing the Positive Action program as a schoolwide program will need a Principal's Kit for the school-climate program, a grade-level Teacher's Kit for each classroom, a Counselor's Kit, Family Kits for parents, a Community Kit, and an Implementation Plan. Other designs of the program will include the above kits plus the Community Kit, Counselor's Kit, Family Kit, Conflict Resolution Kit, Middle School Drug Supplement Kit, and Fifth Grade Drug Supplement Kit.

Optional components or strategies and how they were determined to be optional:

Schools need not implement all program components, as each can stand alone. The components are any grade-level Teacher's Kit or lessons within the kit, School-Climate Principal's Kit, Counselor's Kit, Family Kit, Community Kit, and Conflict Resolution Kit. There is an interactive implementation Web site that allows teachers to go online and enter data regarding what they have implemented periodically (i.e., lessons taught and school climate materials used). There is immediate feedback in a score that gives them the results and guides them in implementing. There is also a printed Implementation Plan that helps plan any component of the program.

BARRIERS AND PROBLEMS

Positive Action is not translated into Spanish. A solution is better funding for the translation and production of these new materials.

PERSONNEL

FULL TIME, PART TIME, PAID, VOLUNTEER

Positive Action Coordinator: this person may be the principal or designee or another program coordinator and is responsible for coordinating the Positive Action Committee and monitoring day-to-day program activities. In a school setting, the coordinator will need to have the credentials of a teacher. The education and training can vary for out-of-school coordinators. Professional credentials are desirable, but anyone who has a passion for children, families, and the community could lead this program. They can be either part time or full time, depending on the scope of the implementation. They can be paid or volunteer.

Parent Coordinator: a member of the Positive Action Committee, this individual provides information to parents and assists with parenting classes. The education and training can vary for these coordinators. Professional credentials are desirable, but anyone who has a passion of children, families, and the community could lead this program. They need a positive rapport with school and others in the community. They can be either part time or full time, depending on the scope of the implementation. They can be paid or volunteer.

Community Coordinator: coordinates the community steering committee, has a positive rapport with families and school, and plans activities. The education and training can vary for these coordinators. Professional credentials are desirable, but anyone who has a passion for children, families, and community could lead this program. They can be either part time or full time, depending on the scope of the implementation. They can be paid or volunteer.

Typical personnel problems encountered by users when implementing this Model Program and potential solutions.

Educators often feel a time constraint. Creating an administrative supported time slot for the program is helpful.

Key staff includes:

- **Positive Action Committee**—This group is composed of a teacher from every grade level, the principal or designee, a support staff representative, several parents, community members and students. They oversee program implementation.
- **Positive Action Coordinator**—This person may be the principal or designee and is responsible for coordinating the Positive Action Committee and monitors day-to-day program activities.
- **Parent Coordinator**—A member of the Positive Action Committee, this individual provides information to parents and assists with parenting classes.
- **Community Coordinator**—Coordinates the community steering committee and plans activities

PERSONNEL TRAINING

Type: SEMINAR/WORKSHOP, Location: ONSITE/OFFSITE,
Length: BASIC (2 day)/REFRESHER (1 day)

The coordinator, staff, faculty, and members of the Positive Action Committee should participate in 1/2 day to 2 days of training. Onsite or offsite training includes basic training (up to 2 days) and refresher training (1 day). The following kinds of training are available: Workshop for Implementation, Workshop for On-going, and Workshop for Publicity. There is also a 2-day Training of Trainers in which attendees become certified to do training for school districts, agencies, and other groups.

Training can be provided directly by a Positive Action trainer. The Training and Publicity Kit contains two workshops for training school personnel and parents in the use of the program, as well as a workshop for school personnel on how to get the best publicity for the program. Each workshop comes with everything that is needed: scripts, transparencies, handouts, etc.

The Orientation Workshop instructs personnel on how to start and use the program, the concepts, and the components. The On-going In-Service Workshop includes seven sessions presented throughout the school year by different personnel that are used to expand program basics. The Publicity Workshop addresses the process of gathering and disseminating news and how to get positive publicity.

COST (estimated in U.S. dollars)

\$10,000 +

Cost considerations for implementing this program as recommended by the developer:

TRAINING

Training provided by Positive

Action trainers: Orientation and

Followup workshops \$800 per day plus
travel expenses

Training materials: Orientation Kit,

Publicity Kit, and On-going Kit:

(Combined into Training Combo Kit) \$500 per kit

Training of Trainers Workshop \$150 per person

MATERIALS

Kindergarten Teacher's Kit	\$450
Teacher's Kits	\$350 to \$475
Drug Supplement Kits	\$225 to \$350
Consumable sets of 30 materials for students	\$30 to \$135
Principal's Kits	\$450
Video Sets	\$550 to \$650
Counselor and family materials	\$75
Community Kit	\$350
Planning Manuals	\$160
Complete price list is available on the Web site.	

Typical cost issues encountered by users when implementing this Model Program and potential solutions:

There is often not enough money to provide Family and Community Kits when needed. Potential solutions are (1) make the Family and Community Kits a higher priority in the budget and (2) implement these kits over time. The Positive Action Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grade Teacher's Kits and the Middle School Drug Kit can stand alone.

INTENDED AGE GROUP

EARLY CHILDHOOD (0–4), CHILDHOOD (5–11), EARLY ADOLESCENT (12–14),
TEENAGER (15–17)

The school program is designed for use with children and youth K–12. The Family Kit is designed for use with all ages.

The Community Kit is designed for use with all ages.

INTENDED POPULATION

MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS

The program has been delivered to and found effective with diverse ethnic and racial groups.

GENDER FOCUS

BOTH GENDERS

Developed for use with both male and female students.

PRODUCTS

Information about various aspects of the program:

Catalog	Reviewer's Guide
Program Description	Scope and Sequence
Summary of Evaluations	Character Education Booklet
Success Stories	CSAP Booklet
Funding Information Packet	Title I, Comprehensive School Reform Booklet
Safe and Drug-Free Schools Booklet	

Curricula by Grade:

Individual kits for K–8th grade	Fifth Grade Drug Supplement Kit
Middle School Drug Supplement Kit	High School Teacher's Kit (9–12)

Principal's Kits:

Elementary School Climate Principal's Kit (K–5)	Secondary School Climate Principal's Kit (6–12)
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Counselor, Family and Community Kits:

Counselor's Kit
Family Kit
Community Kit

Miscellaneous Items:

Training Combo Kit (Orientation, On-going, and Publicity workshops)
Implementation Plan
Rejuvenation Plan
Conflict Resolution Kit

REPLICATION INFORMATION

NO INFORMATION PROVIDED

CONTACT INFORMATION

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

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